

**Ursula Lenker and Anneli Meurman-Solin 2007: *Connectives in the History of English*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 283). viii + 318pp. ISBN 978 90 272 4798 8**

Cristina Suárez Gómez  
*Universitat de les Illes Balears*  
cristina.suarez@uib.es

Clause connection has been of recurrent interest in the study of languages, but it has flourished most vigorously over the last 30 years, especially from the point of view of typological studies (Givón 1979; Haiman and Thompson 1988; Lehmann 1988) and grammaticalization studies (Hopper and Traugott 2003), the latter heavily influenced by the former, since they normally have cross-linguistic scope and investigate common paths of development across languages. In addition to these general studies, research on the evolution of specific types of connectives and individual connectors in the English language has also gained in momentum, the present volume being a good illustration of this. On adverbial connectives, particularly worthy of mention is König's (1992) and Leuschner's (2006) research on concessive and concessive-conditional clauses. The case of complementation in the history of the English language has been more amply analyzed (Warner 1982; Fanego 1992; López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 1998, 2001; Los 2005, etc.). As to relative clauses, they were a favoured object of study in the 1960s (e.g. Rydén 1966), again in the 80s (e.g. Romaine 1982), and have attracted interest once more, from the perspective of clause connection (Suárez-Gómez 2006).

*Connectives in the History of English* contains 12 articles, most of which are revised versions of papers presented at the workshop 'Clausal Connectives in the History of English' at the 13<sup>th</sup> *International Conference on English Historical Linguistics* (Vienna, 23-28 August 2004). This compilation continues the trend of clause combination which began in the 1980s, but introduces new theoretical perspectives and adopts more recent approaches. Kortmann's comprehensive analysis of adverbial subordination (1997), a benchmark in the study of connectives, was clearly influential here. Previous studies on clause connection looked at the sentence as the major unit of analysis and concentrated on its internal structure. Current studies continue to take the sentence as the basic unit of analysis, but ask how it combines in order to form a coherent and cohesive text. The scope is not (or not only) morpho-syntactic, but rather text-linguistic (3). Clause combining is in this volume considered a multifaceted issue in which syntax, semantics, pragmatics and cognition work together. This volume is also an excellent example of corpus-linguistics, since most papers investigate the patterns of variation and change of specific clausal connectives through an analysis of several corpora.

In the introduction, the editors explain that the challenge and main goal of the volume is to offer new theoretical perspectives (3) to the analysis of clause connectives, a highly polyfunctional and categorially fuzzy element; their aims are successfully achieved in this book. Clausal connectives of various types throughout the history of

the English language are analyzed. The traditional types of subordination, namely complement clauses, relative clauses and adverbial clauses, are represented; however, it is the last of these which garners most attention. All the papers adopt a historical scope, in some cases diachronic and in others synchronic.

The collection opens with María José López-Couso's paper on the history of *lest* from an adverbial purpose subordinator 'so that....not' to a minor declarative complementizer used after predicates of fearing (26). López-Couso demonstrates that the evolution of *lest* represents a clear example of syntactic and semantic polyfunctionality, both within and beyond the domain of adverbial subordination. *Lest* evolves from the OE phrasal subordinator *þy læs* (*þe*) and is primarily confined to marking negative purpose, but developed a secondary use as a finite declarative complementizer used with a specific set of predicates, and confined to highly formal discourse.

In the next paper, Bettelou Los deals with the history of *to* as a connective in the history of English, paying special attention to its status. Los proposes an alternative analysis to the traditional one, in which *to* is considered to be a preposition in OE (Traugott 1992: 242). She argues and convincingly demonstrates that the *to*-infinitive in OE can no longer be analyzed as prepositional and should instead be analyzed as clausal. The *to*-infinitive clause, therefore, started to be used in paradigmatic variation with a subjunctive *that*-clause with verbs expressing purpose and intention and verbs of commanding and permitting, and ultimately became the unmarked option in such environments, ousting *that*-clauses as early as early ME.

The remainder of the book, with one exception, focuses on adverbial subordination. Matti Rissanen discusses research on temporal adverbial subordination, in particular the replacement of *op* (*þæt*) of OE by *till* from early ME onwards. Of interest in his study is the peculiarity of the change, which goes against the expected principles of language change. The first surprising fact is that a word – and of a grammatical nature – has been borrowed from another language, in this case Old Norse. The replacement usually involves a transitional period in which the old and new elements coexist, until the new element ultimately disappears. Here, however, an almost instantaneous replacement is described: *till* was borrowed in early ME, rapidly extended, and replaced *op* completely by the end of the thirteenth century. The most likely factor proposed for such a drastic change has to do with a process of homonymy in those cases where *op* was followed by *þæt*. *Op þæt* suffered a process of phonological weakening into *opþe* and became homophonous with the conjunction *opþe* 'or' or the contraction *opþe* 'on the', thus accelerating the change in order to avoid ambiguity.

The next paper, by Laurel Brinton, presents a study of the rise of some adverbial conjunctions such as *any time/anytime*, *each time/eachtime*, *every time/everytime* 'whenever', associated with informal registers of the English language. In Brinton's opinion, *any time*, *each time* and *every time* are adverbial conjunctions. They are derived from prepositional phrases, then recategorized as adverbial phrases, and from adverbial phrases reinterpreted as adverbial conjunctions. This analysis is reinforced by the fact that this connective does not have a syntactic function in the clause in which it appears. In my opinion, this final point is poorly argued and does not adequately explain the

relative clause analysis, especially when one takes into account the existence of examples introduced by *any time that* and *each time that* (88-89), which reinforce the analysis of *any time/each time* as antecedents of relative clauses introduced by the zero relativizer.

The following four papers are all concerned with adverbial subordination, dealing with the expression of concession/contrast in the history of English. The section opens with Rafał Molencki's paper on the evolution of *since* in medieval English. In PDE *since* is used as a preposition or a conjunction indicating time, cause and concession. In OE the equivalent form *siphan* was used most commonly as an adverb and less frequently as a conjunction, in both cases expressing a temporal relation. It was used with such a temporal meaning until in the ME period *after*, originally a locative conjunction and preposition in OE, was reanalyzed as temporal and replaced ME *sithen*. Instead of disappearing, *sithen* began to be used to introduce causal subordinate clauses, confirming Traugott's theory of subjectification and Kortmann's hypothesis of decrease in semantic polyfunctionality.

The evolution of a less frequent concessive connective is reviewed by Elina Sorva in the following paper. She presents the evolution of the subordinator *albeit* in the history of English and also in Scots. The origin of this subordinator can be found in the phrase *all be it (that)* in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Sorva convincingly demonstrates that although this conjunction has a native origin, it has been modelled on the Old French parallel phrase *tout soit il/ce que*.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is not until ME that this combination univerted, grammaticalized completely and became reinterpreted as a connective to express concession. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, far from becoming an unmarked concessive marker, its frequency dropped dramatically. Instead of disappearing, however, it resurfaced again in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, used as a conjunction, an adverb and a preposition, frequently introducing small and non-finite clauses.

The third paper on concessive connectors is Ana Isabel González-Cruz's, and is concerned with the evolution of *while* from late ME onwards, using a corpus covering the years 1420-1710. This is the period in which *while* started to show semantic polyfunctionality. González-Cruz's work aims at integrating pragmatic and semantic considerations in the study of adverbial clause connectives, so that their development is viewed as involving a whole construction rather than an individual item. Emphasis is put on the semasiological development of *while* in English from the (more) concrete domain of time to more abstract domains of conceptualization, thus resulting in "intracategorical polysemy" (Kortmann 1997: 89). She concludes that the semantic development illustrated by *while* is a process of subjectification from content-based temporal meanings to increasingly more abstract (or context-based) interpretations, namely contrast, concession and causal relations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Something similar has happened with *wh-* pronominal relativizers in the history of the English language. They existed as interrogative words and free relativizers, but modelled on the influence of Romance languages, particularly French, started to be used as pronominal relativizers and have been representing the pronominal relativization strategy of the English language since then.

Within this group of papers we can also include that by Carsten Breul on the evolution of locative/contrastive *where/whereas*. Breul applies Relevance Theory, a standard approach within modern pragmatics which is innovatively applied to the evolution of connectors. In his opinion, Relevance Theory provides an answer to some questions which have been left otherwise unresolved, in particular “how the individual interpretations that are the elements of the set of interpretations picked from come into existence” (173). In the case of *where* and *whereas*, it shows how a contrastive meaning gets detached from a locative one so that *whereas* is used without a locative implication and how a locative meaning gets detached from a contrastive one, so that *where* is used without a contrastive implication. Relevance theoretic approaches allow Breul to conclude that the evolution shown by *where/whereas* is the result of a reanalysis made possible by evidence from a number of ambiguous examples which allow for more than one reading (189).

After concession/contrast, the next topic covered in this collection is the evolution of causal connectors in the history of English. Judging from the title, ‘*Forhwi* “because”: shifting deictics in the history of English causal connection’, what we expect in Ursula Lenker’s paper is a study on the evolution of *forhwi* as a causal connector. However, Lenker is in fact concerned with the change that the whole system of causal connectors – not only *forhwi* – underwent in ME and eModE. The main causal connector of OE is *forþæm/forþy* (*þe*), an ambiguous adverb/conjunction, polysemous and polyfunctional, used when the cause is external, internal or rhetorical (Traugott 1992: 252) and irrespective of whether the information in the causal clause is given or not. Unlike PDE, this central connector has a very deictic character, established by the presence of the demonstrative pronouns (*þæm/þy*). Corpus analysis here reveals that new connectors are developed once the deictic nature of *forþæm/forþy* is lost and follow the same deictic pattern (*forþon*, *þy...þy*, *þæs...þæs*, etc.). This pattern disappears in late ME and new coinages to express cause are based upon lexical means (*because*, *since*, etc.).

The next type of clausal connective under discussion are conditional clauses in two specific genres of eModE, namely ‘politics’ and ‘science’. Although the field of conditional clauses is categorially very fuzzy, with a high degree of overlapping with concessive constructions, Claudia Claridge partially solves the problem by analyzing conditional clauses using a text-linguistics approach. She observes that the traditional notion of givenness associated with conditional clauses is incomplete, and instead focuses on the notion of polarity. She convincingly demonstrates that *if*-clauses open up a *yes/no*-polar framework or likelihood cline in the same way as polar questions. The information is uncertain (*if* intrinsically expresses doubt) and is open to negotiation by the writer and addressee(s) (239). Another element in her analysis is the position of the *if*-clause (protasis). According to Greenberg’s Universal 14 (1966: 111), the unmarked position is preposed. Her analysis demonstrates that *if*-clauses actually tend to precede the apodosis; however, there are also instances with either parenthetical or final *if*-clauses. Contrary to some traditional expectations, this is not related to the concept of length or embedding, but is rather related to how conditional clauses are used with both argumentative and interactive purposes. A minor criticism that might be levelled at Claridge’s analysis is that the two analyzed genres contain written discourse. It

remains to be seen whether her conclusions work in a less homogeneous corpus and whether they can also be applied to types of discourse closer to the oral level of language production.

No book on clausal connectors could omit relative clauses, and these are discussed by Anneli Meurman-Solin. In her paper, Meurman-Solin analyzes the so-called 'sentential relative clauses', a type of relative clause very frequently ignored in studies of relativization for their peculiar syntactic and semantic behaviour. From a clause-based approach, the syntactic function of these structures is far from clear, but they are generally considered as peripheral dependants to the main clause. Applying a discourse-based approach, Meurman-Solin shows that these relative clauses establish some sort of anaphoric relation with a chunk of preceding text. Her analysis relies on a database exclusively of epistolary prose, a type of prose characterized by being unplanned and unedited. A similar criticism to that made of Claridge's article above can be made here; a more varied corpus would probably result in different statistical findings. A minor note is that, as a reader, I would also appreciate a transliteration of the relevant parts in some of the less transparent examples, especially taking into account that the text dates from 1540-1708 and are drawn from Older Scots.

The last paper in this compilation, by Thomas Kohnen, is a pilot study on 'connective profiles' in the history of English texts, paying particular attention to aspects of 'orality' and 'literacy'. Kohnen introduces the innovative concept of 'connective profiles', described as patterns of "distribution, frequency and proportion of the major clause-connecting coordinators and subordinators" (289) which he uses as a diagnostic to determine the degree of orality/literacy of sermons and statutes, and which can be applied to text types in general. Traditionally, coordination is linked to 'orality' and subordination to 'literacy'. In this study, sermons are associated with orality, and statutes with literacy. Therefore, the connective profiles of each text type are expected to be different. What is surprising is the fact that connective profiles are not only different in both text-types, but also diachronically different within each text type. That is, from a linguistic point of view, sermons have not been homogeneous throughout the history of the English language. This has always been assumed; however, the analysis in terms of linguistic profiles here reveals a decrease in orality in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, only to increase once more in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Description of texts into text types can thus be further refined with profiles similar to the one proposed here, which prevents us from treating text types as homogeneous units diachronically.

Lenker and Meurman-Solin's book is an excellent and comprehensive compilation of recent research on clausal connectives. Objections could be raised concerning the selection of the contributions, which, although all of a very high standard, in my opinion constitute an unbalanced picture, so often the case with compilations of this kind. With the exception of Los, Meurman-Solin and Kohnen, the remaining papers deal with what is traditionally known as adverbial subordination (temporal,

concessive/contrastive, causal and conditional).<sup>2</sup> Los's and Meurman-Solin's papers are, by contrast, thematically unconnected to the common thread of the remaining studies: Meurman-Solin's paper is concerned with processes of relativization and a specific type of relativizer, and Los describes the evolution of infinitival *to* in the history of English, a clear case of a connective introducing complement clauses. A further criticism might be made of the inclusion of this latter paper in the volume in view of the fact that it is the only one on non-finite subordination, all other articles being based on finite constructions. Finally, Kohnen's paper, although extremely interesting, is a very general paper on 'connective patterns' in genres and text types comprising both coordination and subordination, and hardly conforms to the scope of the other papers.

### References

- Fanego, Teresa 1992: *Infinitive Complements in Shakespeare's English. Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects*. Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.
- Givón, Talmy 1979: 'From Discourse to Syntax: Grammar as a Processing Strategy'. Talmy Givón, ed. *Syntax and Semantics. Discourse Syntax*. New York: Academic P. 81-112.
- Greenberg, Joseph H. 1966: 'Some Universals of Grammar with Particular Reference to the Order of Meaningful Elements'. Joseph H. Greenberg, ed. *Universals of Language*. Cambridge: MIT P. 73-113.
- Haiman, John and Sandra A. Thompson 1988: *Clause Combining in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Hopper, Paul and Elizabeth C. Traugott 2003 (1993): *Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- König, Ekkehard 1992: 'From Discourse to Syntax: The Case of Concessive Conditionals'. Rosemarie Tracy, ed. *Who Climbs the Grammar Tree*. Tübingen: Niemeyer. 423-33.
- Kortmann, Bernd 1997: *Adverbial Subordination. A Typology and History of Adverbial Subordinators Based on European Languages*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lehmann, Christian 1988: 'Towards a typology of clause linkage'. John Haiman and Sandra A. Thompson, eds. *Clause Combining in Grammar and Discourse*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins. 181-225.
- Leuschner, Torsten 2006: *Hypotaxis as Building-Site: the Emergence and Grammaticalization of Concessive Conditionals in English, German and Dutch*. Munich: Lincom Europa.
- López-Couso, María José and Belén Méndez-Naya 1998: 'On Minor Declarative Complementizers in the History of English: The Case of *but*'. Jacek Fisiak and Marcin Krygier, eds. *Advances in English Historical Linguistics*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 161-71.
- 2001: 'On the History of *if*- and *though*-links with Declarative Complement Clauses'. *English Language and Linguistics* 5: 93-107.
- Los, Bettelou 2005: *The Rise of the to-infinitive*. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- Romaine, Suzanne 1982: *Socio-historical Linguistics. Its Status and Methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

<sup>2</sup> To this major group, we could exceptionally add López-Couso's paper, which deals with the evolution of *lest* from an adverbial subordinator to a complementizer and, therefore, still touches upon the field of adverbial subordination.

- Rydén, Mats 1966: *Relative Constructions in Early Sixteenth Century English with Special Consideration to Sir Thomas Elyot*. Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell.
- Suárez-Gómez, Cristina 2006: *Relativization in Early English (950-1250): the Position of Relative Clauses*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Traugott, Elizabeth C. 1992: 'Syntax'. Hogg, Richard, ed. *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Volume 1. The Beginnings to 1066*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 168-289.
- Warner, Antony 1982: *Complementation in Middle English and the Methodology of English Syntax. A Study of the Wyclifite Sermons*. London: Croom Helm.

Received 28 May 2008

Revised version accepted 2 November 2008

Cristina Suárez-Gómez (MA Santiago de Compostela, M.A York) received her PhD in English Linguistics (European Doctorate) from the University of Santiago de Compostela. She lectures in English in the Department of Spanish, Modern Languages and Latin at the University of the Balearic Islands. Her main areas of specialization are English historical syntax, pragmatics, and grammaticalization theory. Other research interests include English dialectal variation from both a synchronic and a diachronic perspective.

Address: Dpt. Filologia Espanyola, Moderna i Llatina, Universitat de les Illes Balears Edifici Ramon Llull, Cra. Valldemossa Km. 7,5. 07122 Palma de Mallorca (SPAIN). Tel: +34 971 259765, Fax: +34 971 17 34 73.